

House Resolution 647

By: Representatives Schofield of the 60th, Anulewicz of the 42nd, Buckner of the 137th, Jones of the 47th, and Hugley of the 136th

A RESOLUTION

1 Creating the House Study Committee on Addressing Period (or Menstruation) Poverty in
2 Girls in Elementary, Middle, and High Schools in Need in Georgia; and for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, the Georgia General Assembly is concerned that girls ages 7-17 are missing
4 school due to being unable to afford menstruation products, period (or menstruation) poverty
5 commonly defined as "poor menstrual knowledge and access to period or sanitary/menstrual
6 products"; and

7 WHEREAS, access to period, sanitary/menstrual, or feminine hygiene products in public
8 schools is a serious and ongoing need in this state; and

9 WHEREAS, when students do not have access to affordable period, sanitary/menstrual, or
10 feminine hygiene products, they may miss multiple days of school every month; and

11 WHEREAS, it can be especially damaging at puberty, when school interactions are crucial
12 to a girl's development; and

13 WHEREAS, at puberty, a girl's confidence plummets, with the onset of menstruation
14 marking the lowest moment for many girls; and

15 WHEREAS, the drop in confidence is so much worse for girls who lack access to period
16 protection. It can force her to miss out on important confidence-building activities in the
17 classroom, on the field, in extracurricular school programs, or the lab, and limit her potential
18 far beyond puberty; and

19 WHEREAS, when students have access to period, sanitary/menstrual, or feminine hygiene
20 products, they are able to continue with their daily lives with minimal interruption; and

21 WHEREAS, the American Academy of Pediatrics and American College of Obstetricians
22 and Gynecologists identify menstruation as a vital sign – a normal and important part of life
23 for girls and adolescents; and

24 WHEREAS, moreover, inadequate menstrual hygiene has been associated with infections
25 and poor health-related quality-of-life; and

26 WHEREAS, studies in the United States have shown that low-income girls report having
27 negative experiences of puberty, especially related to menarche and menstruation, especially
28 when they feel unprepared; and

29 WHEREAS, experiences were commonly described as "embarrassing, traumatic, scary, and
30 confusing and associated with feeling gross, dirty, smelly, and disgusting." These adverse
31 experiences can perpetuate shame, stigma, silence, and secrecy from youth to adulthood; and

32 WHEREAS, it is in the best interests of ensuring our school systems are best prepared to
33 educate healthy, successful Georgians to explore the need for period products in middle
34 schools and what impacts are observed when those products are readily available to students;
35 and

36 WHEREAS, data collection should be provided and analyzed to determine the psychosocial
37 and physical health of students impacts; and

38 WHEREAS, academic research institutions, educators, school nurses, and school
39 administrators should participate in data collection and advisory roles regarding their school's
40 ability to meet student need and the impact they observe that need has on students; and

41 WHEREAS, this data should be used as recommendations of the dissemination of the
42 appropriations allocated to addressing period poverty in Title I schools.

43 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:

44 (1) **Creation of House study committee.** There is created the House Study Committee
45 on Addressing Period (or Menstruation) Poverty in Elementary, Middle, and High
46 Schools in Georgia.

47 (2) **Members and officers.** The committee shall be composed of:

(A) Three members of the House of Representatives to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives. The Speaker shall designate one of such members of the committee as chairperson;

(B) One representative from the Department of Public Health – School Health;

(C) One representative from Georgia Department of Education – School Nursing;

(D) One representative of the Georgia Association of School Nurses;

(E) One representative from the Georgia chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics; and

(F) One representation from Georgia STOMP.

(3) **Powers and duties.** The committee shall undertake a study of the conditions, needs, issues, and problems mentioned above or related thereto and recommend any action or legislation which the committee deems necessary or appropriate.

(4) **Meetings.** The chairperson shall call all meetings of the committee. The committee may conduct such meetings at such places and at such times as it may deem necessary or convenient to enable it to exercise fully and effectively its powers, perform its duties, and accomplish the objectives and purposes of this resolution.

(5) **Allowances, expenses, and funding.**

(A) The legislative members of the committee shall receive the allowances provided for in Code Section 28-1-8 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated.

(B) Members of the committee who are state officials, other than legislative members, or who are state employees shall receive no compensation for their services on the committee, but they may be reimbursed for expenses incurred by them in the performance of their duties as members of the committee in the same manner as they are reimbursed for expenses in their capacities as state officials or employees.

(C) Members of the committee who are not legislators, state officials, or state employees shall receive a daily expense allowance in an amount the same as that specified in subsection (b) of Code Section 45-7-21 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, as well as the mileage or transportation allowance authorized for state employees.

(D) The allowances authorized by this resolution shall not be received by any member of the committee for more than five days unless additional days are authorized. Funds necessary to carry out the provisions of this resolution shall come from funds appropriated to the House of Representatives; except that funds for the reimbursement of the expenses of state officials, other than legislative members, and for the reimbursement of the expenses of state employees shall come from funds appropriated to or otherwise available to their respective agencies.

84 **(6) Report.**

85 (A) In the event the committee adopts any specific findings or recommendations that
86 include suggestions for proposed legislation, the chairperson shall file a report of the
87 same prior to the date of abolishment specified in this resolution, subject to
88 subparagraph (C) of this paragraph.

89 (B) In the event the committee adopts a report that does not include suggestions for
90 proposed legislation, the chairperson shall file the report, subject to subparagraph (C)
91 of this paragraph.

92 (C) No report shall be filed unless the same has been approved prior to the date of
93 abolishment specified in this resolution by majority vote of a quorum of the committee.

94 A report so approved shall be signed by the chairperson of the committee and filed with
95 the Clerk of the House of Representatives.

96 (D) In the absence of an approved report, the chairperson may file with the Clerk of the
97 House of Representatives a copy of the minutes of the meetings of the committee in lieu
98 thereof.

99 **(7) Abolishment.** The committee shall stand abolished on December 1, 2019.